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Implementing the HIV Policy in the Clothing and Textile Industry

Acknowledging and accepting that the response to HIV and advanced HIV constitutes a contribution to protecting and respecting human rights and fundamental liberties for all, including workers and their families, according to the institutional vision and mission.



Photograph of the event to launch VESTEX's HIV trade-association workplace policy, courtesy of USAID/PASCA. Guatemala, August 29, 2013.

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February, 2015

On August 29, 2013, the Gremial de Vestuario y Textiles de Guatemala (Clothing and Textile Industry Association–VESTEX in Spanish) launched its HIV Workplace Policy, with the aim of contributing to the national response to the epidemic by implementing prevention activities. These include education and awareness-raising to over 40,000 workers from 160 firms that make up this industry.

Since that date, the HIV/AIDS prevention policy has been one of the most pressing issues in textile-industry companies. This focus helps them to address the issue in the workplace and it helps them to comply with Corporate Social Responsibility programs and the requirements of international customers.

VESTEX appointed Sonia Flores as the Coordinator for the policy-implementation process in member companies. This official takes advantage of her close relationships with firms, which she has established as part of her job responsibilities, to communicate the importance of complying with these programs that benefit workers and their families.

During the implementation process, training activities were implemented in over 20 companies, which represent at least 10,000 workers. Their awareness has been raised and some of them are acting as leaders to help address the HIV issue in their firms.

VESTEX's HIV/AIDS sectoral policy has received technical support from the USAID/PASCA LMG Project. At present, fifteen companies have joined by signing the Agreement on Corporate Social Responsibility and HIV in the Workplace. VESTEX has established strategic alliances with Fundación Iturbide, the International Labor Organization, and the National HIV/AIDS Program.

Within the framework of AIDS World Day on December 1, the National HIV Program/ Ministry of Health gave VESTEX public recognition for its work in implementing HIV workplace policies.